

# Cicerone Certification Program™

## Novice Syllabus

This is the knowledge to be required for the first level of the Cicerone Certification Program, the exam for **Certified Beer Server**.

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# Full Syllabus

## I. Serving Beer

- A. The three tier system in the United States
  - 1. By law, alcoholic beverages must comply with the three tier system in the United States. The three tiers are Brewers/Importers, Distributors, Retailers.
    - a. Brewers & importers sell to distributors
    - b. Distributors sell to retailers
    - c. Retailers sell to consumers
- B. Serving Alcohol
  - 1. Alcohol's Effects
    - a. Absorption and elimination
    - b. Physical and behavioral indicators of consumption
  - 2. Responsible serving
    - a. Legal considerations
    - b. Good practice in selling alcohol
- C. Beer Storage
  - 1. Beer is best consumed fresh
    - a. When beer is released from the brewery, it is ready to drink
    - b. A very few strong or intensely flavored beers may age in ways that make them interesting to drink months or years later if properly cellared.
  - 2. Freshness can be preserved and enhanced by wholesaler and retailer actions
    - a. Rotate inventory
      - i. Ensure that beer is consumed in the order of dating
      - ii. Remove out of date products from service inventory
      - iii. When beers lack an expiration date:
        - Non-pasteurized draft beer about 45-60 days.
        - Pasteurized draft beer about 90-120 days.
        - Bottled beer:
          - 1. If kept refrigerated, can be good for up to six months
          - 2. When not refrigerated or subjected to other stresses, may be noticeably off after three months
          - 3. Taste aged product against fresh product to determine deterioration
    - b. Store beer properly
      - i. Refrigerated storage is best for all beers at all times. Required for draft beer and many craft beers.
      - ii. Non-refrigerated storage accelerates aging and development of off flavors. With time, all beers will develop signs of oxidation (with papery, wet cardboard flavors).
        - 1. Possible development of microbial off flavors (sour, buttery)
        - 2. Possible autolysis of yeast when present (meaty)
      - iii. Bottled beers are subject to skunking
        - 1. Caused by sunlight and fluorescent light
        - 2. Most noticeable in the aroma of the beer
        - 3. Occurs in minutes in unprotected beer (clear glass)

4. Green glass bottles provide very little protection from skunking because it does not block the harmful wavelengths of light
  5. Brown glass provides the best protection of any bottle
  6. Cans, bottles in closed case boxes that completely shield beer from light give maximum protection from skunking.
- c. Serve beer properly
- i. Draught beer must be served using CO<sub>2</sub> or a CO<sub>2</sub>-nitrogen mix at the proper pressure setting.
  - ii. Compressed air should never be used instead of CO<sub>2</sub> or a CO<sub>2</sub>-nitrogen mix in a draft dispense system.
  - iii. A party pump limits the flavor stability of the beer to **less than one day** because oxygen is put in contact with the beer.

#### D. Beer Glassware

1. Select appropriate glassware
  - a. Size – based on style and alcohol content (stronger beers, smaller glass), provide room for 1-inch head
  - b. Shape – tradition for style, presentation
  - c. Brand – branded glasses matched to beer
2. Use beer clean glassware
  - a. Glass cleaning procedure
    - i. Empty glass into open drain
    - ii. Wash with sudsless soap & brush
    - iii. Rinse in cold water, heel in, heel out
    - iv. Rinse in sanitizer
    - v. Dry on rack so air circulates inside
    - vi. Rinse with cold water immediately before dispense
  - b. Checking glass for “beer clean”
    - i. Without beer
      - Sheeting & spots
      - Salt test (Wet glass, sprinkle salt throughout, places where salt does not adhere are not beer clean.)
    - ii. With beer
      - Head size, shape, retention
      - Lacing as beer is consumed
  - c. Preparation to serve
    - i. Glass temperature
      - Room temp is fine, chilled is OK, but unnecessary.
      - Frozen/frosted is not recommended: causes foaming, too cold
    - ii. Rinse: cold water rinse of glass before filling aids in creating a beer-clean glass and achieving ideal head formation and retention.

#### E. Serving Bottled Beer

1. Examine bottle
  - i. Check for yeast on bottom and decide how to pour
    - Retain yeast in bottle
    - Pour yeast

- Small amount of yeast found in many beers, can just pour
  - Hefeweizen: some rouse the yeast to maximize yeast content in the beer. Some consumers prefer their beer without the yeast.
  - ii. Look for white flakes (snow-like) which could indicate old, unstable beer. Do not serve beer in this condition.
  - iii. Look for a thin ring of gunk at liquid level in neck (if visible) likely bad bottle if present. Do not serve beer in this condition.
2. Opening bottle: twist off, lift off, cork, combo
- i. Twist off: twist off by hand. Napkin may be used to aid grip, protect hand.
  - ii. Lift caps
    - Prefer openers with a bar or other lift area at least a ¼ inch wide to prevent possibility of breaking the bottle during opening.
    - Lift in one motion
  - iii. Mushroom cork: remove wire cage by untwisting the tab. Then remove by hand, napkin may aid grip. Be gentle so as not to disturb sediment and make beer volatile.
  - iv. Cap plus cork: corkscrew will be required after removing cap.
  - v. If rare, unusual or new beer, you may want to present the cap to the consumer. Nearly always want to present the cork.
  - vi. Check bottle lip: ensure that bottle lip has not been damaged during opening creating the possibility of broken glass being poured into the consumers' glass. May also examine for rust, dried beer or yeast that could affect flavor or appearance of beer.
3. Pouring bottled beer
- i. Hold glass at 45 degree angle, pour down the side until glass is half full
  - ii. Gently tilt glass upright and pour down the middle to create approximately 1 inch of foam head on the beer as the pour finishes. Weizen head will be larger with 2-3 inches of head.
  - iii. Some brands contain a small amount of yeast at the bottom of the bottle. In most cases, you want to retain the yeast in bottle so be prepared to stop pouring when you see the yeast moving toward the top of the bottle.
  - iv. When in doubt about pouring yeast, ask the consumer their preference.
- F. Serving Draught Beer
- a. Pouring a beer
- i. Hold glass at 45 degree angle, one inch below the tap faucet
  - ii. Grip tap handle near the base, pull forward to the fully open position to start the flow of beer. Never open beer tap part-way as this causes foaming.
  - iii. Pour down the side until glass half full
  - iv. While continuing to pour gently tilt glass upright and pour down the middle to create approximately 1 inch of foam head on the beer as the pour finishes.
  - v. Close faucet as foam cap reaches the top of the glass to prevent beer waste.
  - vi. Never put tap faucet in contact with the glass or allow it to become immersed in beer in the glass.

- b. Changing a keg
  - i. Allow kegs 24 hours in the cooler to chill and settle before tapping and serving.
  - ii. On common American and import Sankey kegs: grip keg coupler handle, pull out and raise to the “up” or “off” position to disengage. Turn the coupler a quarter turn (90 degrees) counterclockwise to unseat. Lift off of the keg.
  - iii. Seat the coupler on a new keg. Turn clockwise a quarter turn (90 degrees) to engage then lower the coupler handle to the “down” or “on” position.
  - iv. In long-draw systems that use them, the foam-on-beer (FOB) detector for the keg needs to be reset after a keg change. This is usually done by venting the FOB mechanism to release foam and gas from the chamber.

## II. Beer Styles

### A. Beer characteristics

1. Quantitative parameters of beer character
  - a. International Bitterness Units – hop bitterness
  - b. Alcohol content
    - by volume
    - by weight
  - c. Color: SRM basics
2. Qualitative parameters of beer character
  - a. Aroma
  - b. Flavor
  - c. Aftertaste
  - d. Mouthfeel
  - e. Carbonation
  - f. Temperature

B. Basic Beer Styles (understand the origin, type (lager or ale), color, common alcohol content and basic flavor of each style). Refer to Beer Judge Certification Program guidelines found at [www.bjcp.org](http://www.bjcp.org) for details.

1. German/Czech
  - a. Lagers
    - i. Pale
      - Pilsner
    - ii. Amber/dark/strong
      - Oktoberfest
      - Bock/Doppelbock
  - b. Ales
    - i. Wheat beers
      - Weizen/Weiss
2. Belgian
  - a. Trappist & Abbey Ales
  - b. Lambic
  - c. Saison
  - d. Strong Belgian Ales
3. British

- a. English Ales
    - i. Pale ales and bitters
    - ii. Dark beers: Mild, Brown ale and Porter
  - b. Scottish Ales
    - i. Scottish Ales
    - ii. Scotch Ale
  - c. Irish Ales
    - i. Stouts: dry, foreign and Imperial
4. American
- a. Indigenous styles
    - American Lager & its variants
    - California Common
  - b. Adopted styles
    - i. Wheat Beers
    - ii. Blonde Ale
    - iii. Pale and Amber Ales
    - iv. India Pale Ale
    - v. Brown Ale/Porter
    - vi. Stout/Oatmeal Stout/Imperial Stout
    - vii. Pilsner, Oktoberfest, Bock
  - c. Specialty beers: beers are also available that include: fruit, herbs and other natural flavor ingredients such as coffee and honey

### III. Beer Flavor and Evaluation

- A. Taste & Flavor
1. How we perceive flavors
    - a. Aroma
    - b. Flavor
      - i. Sweet
      - ii. Salty
      - iii. Sour/Acid
      - iv. Bitter
      - v. Umami
  2. Assessing flavor
    - a. Environment for tasting
    - b. Aspects of beer appreciation
      - i. Aroma
      - ii. Appearance
      - iii. Flavor
      - iv. Mouthfeel
      - v. Aftertaste
- B. Normal beer flavors
1. Malt: bready, biscuity, toasty, roasty
  2. Hops:
    - a. Can impart bitterness, flavor and aroma effects
    - b. Common hop aromas & flavors: citrus, spicy, flowery, perfumy, herbal, earthy

3. Yeast flavors
  - a. Chief ale attribute lacking in lagers: fruitiness
  - b. Yeast contributes special flavors and traits in many beers
  - c. Other yeast and bacteria can contribute to beer flavor
- C. Off-flavor knowledge
  1. Off-flavors in beer can come from many sources:
    - a. Brewing technique
    - b. Brewers yeast itself
    - c. Other yeast or bacteria
    - d. Poor storage and serving practice
  2. Retailers can prevent common beer off-flavors
    - a. Skunky beer
      - i. Brown bottles v. green bottles
      - ii. Prevent exposure to light that can skunk beer
        - Sunlight
        - Fluorescent light
          - Remove fluorescent light or eliminate exposure
          - Keep boxed, don't sell display beers
    - b. Oxidized beer
      - i. Check dating on beers when it arrives
      - ii. Store beer at refrigerated temps
      - iii. Rotate stock
      - iv. Promote slow moving beer
    - c. Proper line cleaning
      - i. Clean lines every two weeks
      - ii. Without this sour/acidic beer may result
      - iii. Most dramatic effect seen in first pint of the day
      - iv. Proper line cleaning can increase sales of draught beer
      - v. While they may not comment, consumers can taste the difference when draft lines aren't being properly cleaned.

#### **IV. Beer ingredients and brewing processes**

- A. Malted barley
  1. Cereal grain like wheat, rice
    - A seed that can grow into whole new plant
  2. Malting process
    - a. Awakens seed, initiates growth
    - b. Done to prepare barley for use in brewing
    - c. Dried and possibly toasted to allow for storage and transportation to brewer
  3. Wide range of malts available
    - a. Very pale to very dark
    - b. Flavor varies from bready to coffee-like
    - c. Key determinant in beer color
- B. Hops
  1. Green, pinecone-like flower from fast-growing vine

2. Dried and sometimes ground and compressed into pellets
3. More than 50 different varieties of hops.
4. Very selective growing conditions limits commercial production
  - a. United States
    - i. Primarily Yakima valley, Washington State
    - ii. Some in Oregon, Idaho, California
  - b. Other major growing areas in
    - i. Germany
    - ii. Czech Republic
    - iii. Belgium
    - iv. Australia/New Zealand
5. Hop characteristics in beer determined mostly by:
  - Variety selected
  - How used in brewing

#### C. Yeast

1. Two major classes of yeast: ale and lager
  - a. Ale generally ferments at about 68 F and gives fruitier flavor
  - b. Lager generally ferments at about 50 F and lacks fruity character
2. Dozens of different yeast strains available
  - Selection influences beer flavor and production process

#### D. Water

1. Water makes up 90+% of the weight of beer.
2. All water contains traces of minerals
  - a. Many are essential to beer production
  - b. Several have desirable flavor impact
3. Modern brewers adjust water chemistry to fit the requirements of the beer they brew

### V. Pairing Beer with Food

- A. Flavors in beer pair nicely with most foods
- B. Classic examples include:
  1. Dry stout with oysters
  2. Wheat beer with green salad
  3. IPA with blue cheese
  4. Imperial stout with flourless chocolate cake